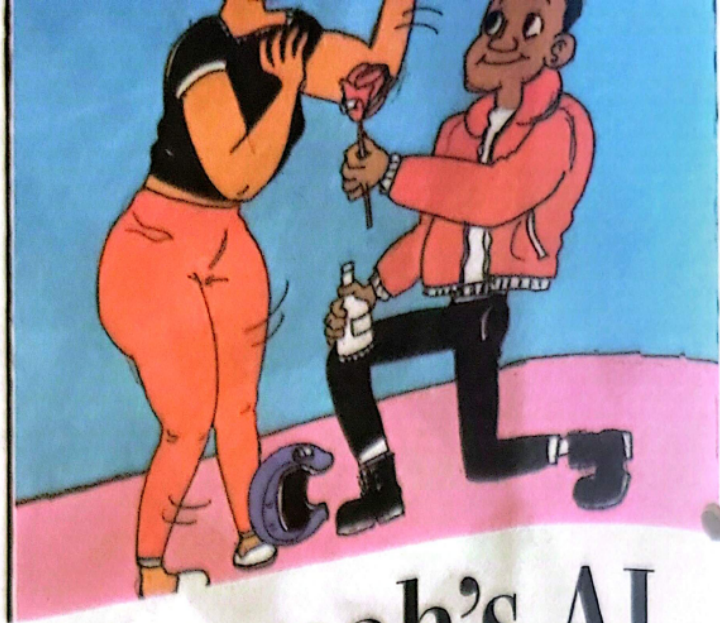




Sheenah's AI ruins her life

BY ARNOLD MUGABE

On Valentine's Day, Sheenah asked her friend Sisi to record her as she tested her AI personal assistant. She wanted to do more than just "Google stuff." As they boarded a boda boda to go to school, Sheenah opened her AI assistant app and gave it bold instructions.

"Hey. Today is Valentine's Day. Access my phone contacts, gallery, WhatsApp, and any other information you might need. Invite 10 of my best friends to a party scheduled for 6pm. Also, based on what you know about my taste, order snacks and drinks online."

In the evening, when they came back, Sisi positioned the phone and Sheenah began streaming live.

"Hi chat, I keep using AI to search random things, but today morning I asked my AI to organise a Valentine's party for me. If it did what I asked, then the guests should start arriving soon. Stay tuned to find out who is coming to the party. Let me take a quick shower and I will be right back."

As Sheenah disappeared into the bedroom, Sisi remained in the sitting room, camera rolling.

Moments later, she saw Muzamiru, Sheenah's boda boda rider, walking through the gate. He wore a red jacket and black trousers. He was usually shy and humble, barely making eye contact. But this time, he confidently sat down on the sofa. Sisi's heart skipped. She didn't ask questions immediately. But she also didn't want to imagine that the AI had invited him as Sheenah's guest.

Before she could process it, another guest arrived, Anita, Sheenah's laundry lady. Anita's nails were freshly manicured. Clearly, she had not come to do laundry.

Then the unthinkable happened.

Kanyankole, the milkman also arrived and sat in the sofa. The moment Sisi saw Kanyankole step through the gate, her heart pumped. The AI had not selected "best friends." It had selected frequent contacts. Panicking, Sisi propped the phone on its

stand and rushed to the bedroom.

"Sheenah, you won't believe the people your AI has invited! We have to stop streaming!"

"No, Sisi. Keep streaming," Sheenah objected. "Tell the chat to stay tuned and watch this space because this party is just getting started." Helpless, Sisi returned to the sitting room just in time to witness another entrance. The Rolex guy. "Sorry, I couldn't buy anything fancy," he announced cheerfully, pulling 10 rolled chapatis from a black *kaveera*. "But I have brought my delicious *kikomando*. Everyone is getting a Rolex."

Sisi nearly fainted. Still, she kept streaming.

When Sheenah heard the Rolex guy announcing his arrival from the bedroom, she realised what was up. Scared she jumped and grabbed her phone. "Abort task! Abort task!" she commanded into the app.

The AI responded calmly: "Sorry, Sheenah. I am currently tracking the vendors, and guests and they are approaching your location."

Sheenah felt her knees weaken. "Stop the stream and delete the entire TikTok app," she told Sisi who had come to the door.

"It's not worth it. You will lose all your subscribers," Sisi replied.

Sheenah took a deep breath.

"Fine," she said. "We will say it was a prank."

As soon as Muzamiru saw Sheenah, he slowly stood up. Holding a single plastic flower.

"Mukwano Sheenah, *webale kumpa omukisa okubeera Valentino wo*," he said softly.

(My dear Sheenah, thank you for giving me the chance to be your Valentine.)

The AI had sent Muzamiru a personal message, in Luganda, asking him to be her Valentine. Sheenah didn't know how to explain to Muzamiru that an advanced AI system had accidentally selected him based on data patterns and communication frequency? It would take a week to explain.

So instead, she accepted the flower. The livestream exploded. And just as she tried to gather herself, three online food vendors pulled up at the gate, carrying boxes of snacks, drinks, and a large heart-shaped cake. Sheenah knew she was officially a meme.